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JO McDILL'S MUSINGS.

THE HEARTLESSNESS OF WALL STREET.

Wall street papers have much to say of our nation's pension bill, and, as much as possible, liberality in the granting of pensions to private soldiers is discouraged.

The National Tribune, in taking up the cudgel for the soldiers, makes some comparisons not flattering to the money power. In a summary of the article referred to, we find that private soldiers who served three years during the Civil war received in pay, clothing, food and bounties the enormous sum of \$1,123.25.

But few of the private soldiers were able to lay up a cent with which to begin life at the close of the war, because there were members of families at home dependent for support.

People who know anything of prices in war times do not need to be told that three hundred and seventy-four dollars a year scarcely kept a family above want. After the war, the old soldier entered the race for a living, handicapped by wounds or disease. Not one in a thousand but was worse off, physically, if he was only through one active campaign.

If it was merely a cold offer of money, the Angel Gabriel could not, to-day, hire men for ten times the money to take the same risks and endure the same hardships. The privates of the Union army did not fight for money. They are all old, now, broken in health, and generally poor. I know old soldiers, not intemperate, who are barely one remove from want—and that one remove is due to the pittance called "pension," and at which there is such spiteful kicking in the upper circles of bloated wealth-grabbers. There are tens of thousands of old soldiers not worth a penny if their debts were paid.

So much for being a private soldier and fighting for principle. The pay is not in money or Wall street gratitude.

The able-bodied men who staid at home received from two to six dollars per day. But it is not of the common wage-earner I wish to speak. Surely, that class of people did not get too much. A comparison shows that the soldier donated as much as he received. I quote: "If we call the average price paid for United States bonds 50 cents, we should find that, in gold value, the bond-holders lend the government only \$1,190,756,147, or less than half the aggregate value of the donations to the government by the men who served in the army and navy." Not only did the soldier donate value in time, but he helped pay the bond-holder both principal and interest. In other words, the soldier donated more than the bond-holder loaned, and still paid their full share of the debt in the indirect taxes the government saw fit to collect.

In further summarizing the Tribune's statements, we find that, up to the year 1893, the money-lenders, upon a gold value of \$200,000,000, had received the enormous sum of \$5,344,573,740. From the foundation of the government to the present time, the government has paid, in pensions, the sum of \$3,200,000,000, and the sum paid bond-holders in interest, not counting premiums or the advance in the price of bonds, amounts to the enormous sum of three billion dollars.

The soldiers made it possible to have a government. The bond-holders bled the government—led as Rockefeller bleeds the lamp-burners, or as the coal barons bleed the miners and coal burners. Yet, the dirty, foul hyena howl set up by certain newspapers and politicians against the pension bill is inspired by

that class of men who bought bonds with a fifty-cent dollar, and had them paid in a hundred-cent dollar.

The old soldier has done some grumbling, but he has abundant reason to do so. His treatment, compared with the treatment of the bond-holder, is the treatment of a stray dog, compared with a robber chieftain on a throne of gold. Still, the old soldier has only asked for the means of a decent existence—asked for it because he would keep the wolf from the door of his humble habitation, and, maybe, educate his children.

There is not a man in all this great country who has studied the situation, and who has enough of honor and humanity to be permitted to dwell among civilized people, but will concede that the private soldier of the Civil war has never received as much as he was entitled to, say nothing about what the bond-holder plundered from the tax-payer. The trouble with the old soldier is that he does not lay the blame where it belongs, and fight his real enemy.

It ought to be clear to people who can reason that a government that did so much for its plunderers and so little for its defenders was not a government of the people. Too much friendship has been shown for the government's plunderers. That the government has shown as much friendship for the soldier is not because the politicians felt that friendship, but because of the old soldier vote and influence. Deprive the old soldier of a vote, and, so far as the friendship of most politicians goes, the soldier might beg, tramp or starve. It is the friendship of the great common people that has made the lot of the soldier, his children and widow as tolerable as it is. If left to the common people, it would have been different: The little the soldier has received has been wrung from the hands of Greed and Selfishness.

Anything like decent treatment has been as grudgingly given as Rockefeller's endowment to universities. The public mind must be con-

THANKSGIVING

Thankful I'm living and moving to-day;
Thankful for light on the flower-strewn way;
Thankful for love and a heart light and gay;
Thankful to God.

Who in bounty daily gives
Blessings unnumbered—
As long as I live.

Thankful for home where my little ones sleep;
Thankful for voices that happily ring;
Thankful for hands that so tenderly cling;
Thankful to God.

For the love that He sheds
In measure unspoken
On my babies' heads.

Thankful for friends with their hearts ever true;
Thankful that troubles are only a few;
Thankful I'm walking 'midst roses, not rue;
Thankful to God.

For His life-giving breath,
And a mansion beyond
The dark river, Death.

Thankful for all that the Father bestows;
Thankful that Hope is a flower that grows;
Thankful for love that unceasingly flows;
Thankful to God.

And my homage I pay
To the Father in Heaven
This Thanksgiving day. —Commoner.

Greed never drew a patriotic breath in all its long existence, and never will. Our bond-holders could be no exception. Greed has but one characteristic, and that is, no sentiment of real brotherly feeling for human kind. No wonder it feels not for the man who saved his country, and begrudges the soldier the pittance of a small pension. Greed is not human. It was laid in the "bottomless pit" and hatched in Hades.

CRIME AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS.

A Paper Read by Wesley Huff, Before the
Men's Social Science Club, Monday Night.

We have up for discussion, to-night, "Crime and Social Conditions."

Webster defines crime to be "Any violation of law, either Divine or human; an omission of a duty commanded, or any aggravated offense against morality or the public welfare."

We are told that, in the beginning, God created the heavens, the earth, a man and a subtle beast—the serpent.

With the advent of man and this serpent appears crime. Adam's association with this serpent led to the commission of the first crime recorded. This gives us the origin and the age of crime.

There are many who believe that this serpent has kept pace with and been the constant companion of the human race, from Adam to the present time, and is still active in the affairs of man. This may account for crimes of the past. I don't think it does for the crimes of to-day. But, without regard to the cause, history, sacred and profane, tells us of little more than one unbroken chain of crime—man's inhumanity to man.

Now we have traced crime from its beginning. We will now look at crime as it appears under our present civilization.

Our prisons, national, state, county and municipal, with their tens of thousands of unfortunate mortals doing time for crimes ranging from petit larceny to train-robbing; from picking pockets to defaulting; from assault to murder, give us rather a sad picture of society to-day.

But these are not all the criminals. Look at our postal department—but little less than a den of thieves. Look at the perjured villains in the St. Louis city council. Look at the crimes in the Missouri legislature. Look at the grafters in Kansas stuffing pay rolls. Take your pencil, jot down the crimes you see in your daily paper for one week, and see if it does not astonish you.

All the crimes I have referred to exist in the society of to-day, and are only the surface flow. The under-tow is infinitely worse, but we cannot see it. This criminal condition is a sad commentary on our Christian civilization.

Now, the burning question is, What is the root cause of these criminal conditions? Many believe in the snake theory of crime; others in the total-depravity theory as the cause. Neither theory is correct. No man was ever influenced by a serpent to commit a crime, nor was any man ever totally depraved.

When a child comes into this world, it is neither good or bad. It knows nothing. It is not even conscious of its existence. Now, wrapped up in this little body is the possible future man. The future man, for good or bad, depends upon certain conditions. Send that child into the slums of the city, surrounded by poverty and crime, half-fed, half-clothed, poorly housed. What's your product? A criminal to a finish—a veritable Arab of the desert and robber of the rock. Now reverse the conditions. Educate, feed, clothe and house to his natural wants; then give him an equal chance to maintain life. Now what is your product? A law-abiding citizen. So, man, good or bad, is the product of social conditions. This fact leads me to the declaration that social condi-

[Concluded on editorial page.]

R. L. ADAMS,

UNDERTAKING

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